

shall make a final report through the Homeland Security Council to the President on the recommended program within 60 days.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This directive was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 30.

Remarks Announcing the Lessons of Liberty Initiative in Rockville, Maryland

October 30, 2001

Thank you all very much. Sit down. Behave yourself. *[Laughter]* Thank you for the warm welcome. *[Laughter]* I'm honored to be here to announce a national effort to bring together veterans and students all across America during the week of Veterans Day, to give our young examples of duty and courage at a time when both are sorely needed.

I want to thank Senator Dole for being here. I appreciate his eloquence and his service to the country. He is a—*[applause]* I want to thank the two members of my Cabinet who traveled with me today, Secretary Principi and Secretary Paige, both of whom represent the best of public service. I want to thank Congresswoman Connie Morella for being here, as well.

Rebecca, thank you for opening up your beautiful school. I want to thank you. And I want to thank the teachers who are here. Teaching is such a noble profession. And if some of you students are wondering what you might want to do when you get older, think about teaching.

I also want to thank the students and the veterans and my fellow Americans. I can assure you it makes some of us old guys feel warm in our hearts when we see the enthusiasm you have for your school and the love you have for your country. I am proud to be standing with the Patriots.

We're a nation of patriots. The attacks of September the 11th and the attacks that have followed were designed to break our spirit. But instead, they've created a new spirit in America. We have a renewed spirit of patriotism. We see it in the countless flags that are flying everywhere in America. We hear it in familiar phrases that move us more deeply

than ever before. We all know that this is one Nation, under God. And we pray that God will bless America, the land that we all love, regardless of our race, regardless of our religion, regardless of where we live.

We have a renewed appreciation of the character of America. We are a generous people, a thoughtful people who hurt and share the sadness when people lose their life or when people are hurt. We've helped each other in every way we know, in donations, in acts of kindness, in public memorials, in private prayer. We have shown in difficult times that we're not just a world power, that we're a good and kind and courageous people.

As we pursue the enemy in Afghanistan, we feed the innocents. As we try to bring justice to those who have harmed us, we find those who need help. The events of these 7 weeks have shown something else. They have shown a new generation, your generation, that America and the cause of freedom have determined enemies, that there are people in this world who hate what America stands for. They hate our success; they hate our liberty. We have learned all too suddenly that there are evil people who have no regard for human life and will do whatever it takes to try to bring this mighty Nation to its knees.

On the Korean War Memorial in Washington are these words: "Freedom is not free." Our commitment to freedom has always made us a target of tyranny and intolerance. Anyone who sets out to destroy freedom must eventually attack America, because we're freedom's home. And we must always be freedom's home and freedom's defender. We must never flinch in the face of adversity, and we won't.

You've been learning this by studying your history—at least some of you by studying your history. *[Laughter]* Now you're learning the price of freedom by following the news. You're learning that to be an American citizen in a time of war is to have duties. You're learning how a strong country responds to a crisis by being alert and calm, resolute and patient.

And you're the first students who ever learned the—who have had to learn the reality that we're having to fight a war on our

own land. You're the first generation of students who has ever witnessed a war fought in America. This is a two-front war we fight. On one front is the homefront. Our Government is doing everything we possibly can to disrupt and deny and destroy anyone who would harm America again. And the truth of the matter is, the best way to fight for the homeland is to find the terrorists wherever they hide, wherever they run, and to bring them to justice.

I also want to make it clear that the doctrine I laid out to the United States Congress is a doctrine this Nation will enforce. It says clearly that if you harbor a terrorist, if you feed a terrorist, if you provide sanctuary to a terrorist, if you fund a terrorist, you are just as guilty as the terrorist that inflicted the harm on the American people.

Our Nation gave those who harbor the Al Qaida organization ample opportunity to respond to reasonable demands. Our demands were just, and they were fair. We said very simply, "Turn over Al Qaida. Send the terrorists out of your land. Release the innocent Americans and other foreigners you hold hostage in Afghanistan, and destroy Al Qaida terrorist camps and training activity camps." And we gave them ample opportunity to respond, and they chose the wrong course. And then—they will now pay a price for choosing the wrong course.

This is a nation that is resolved to win. And win we must, not only for your generation but for generations to come.

This country has always been able to count on men and women of great courage. From the day America was founded, 48 million have worn the uniform of the United States. More than 25 million veterans are living today, some of whom are with us at Wootton High, and you may know some of them in your families. I know one such veteran. He fought in World War II, like Senator Dole—my dad.

We must remember that many who served in our military never lived to be called veterans. We must remember many had their lives changed forever by experiences or the injuries of combat. All veterans are examples of service and citizenship for every American to remember and to follow.

In 12 days, on Veterans Day, we will honor them. We will remember the Bob Doles of the world. We will remember a generation that liberated Europe and Asia and put an end to concentration camps. We will remember generations that fought in the cold mountains of Korea and manned the outposts of the cold war. We will remember those who served in the jungles of Vietnam and on the sands of the Persian Gulf. In each of these conflicts, Americans answered danger with incredible courage. We were equal to every challenge. And now a great mission has been given a new generation, our generation, and we vow not to let America down.

Today I have a special mission for our veterans and a special request of our schools. I ask all public, private, and home schools to join our Lessons for Liberty initiative by inviting a veteran to speak to your students during the week of Veterans Day. I'm particularly pleased to announce that Wootton High has already put out the call, and Ron Ten Eyck has answered. Ron's a veteran of World War II. You need to listen to what he has to say.

Lessons of Liberty is supported by veterans groups all across America: American Legion, VFW, Military Order of the World Wars, as well as education groups all across our country. Anyone interested in participating in this important event should go to this Web page: www.va.gov, and then click on Veterans Day.

In addition to launching Lessons of Liberty, I will sign a proclamation in a minute asking all Americans to observe the week of November 11th as National Veterans Awareness Week. In these difficult days here in America, I ask all of us, children and adults, to remember the valor and sacrifice of our veterans. American veterans have extraordinary stories. We should listen to them. American veterans preserved our world and freedom, and we should honor them. American veterans show us the meaning of sacrifice and citizenship, and we should learn from them.

Americans should always honor our veterans. At this moment, we especially need the example of their character. And we need a new generation to set examples of its own,

examples in service and sacrifice and courage. These veterans have shaped our history, and with their values, your generation will help guide our future.

God bless. May God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in the auditorium at Thomas S. Wootton High School. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator Bob Dole; Rebecca Newman, principal, Thomas S. Wootton High School; and Ron Ten Eyck, commander, American Legion Post 86, Rockville, MD.

Proclamation 7491—Veterans Day, 2001

October 30, 2001

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Two hundred and twenty-five years ago, the signers of the Declaration of Independence declared that “all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

Throughout the course of American history, courageous men and women have taken up arms to secure, defend, and maintain these core principles upon which our Nation’s freedoms depend. On September 11, 2001, terrorists ruthlessly attacked our land and these freedoms. The terrorists’ deluded attempt to assail our spirit failed, and our Nation’s response reveals that the spirit of freedom is as strong as ever. Our troops are now fighting overseas to defeat terrorism, and, in that effort, they follow in the footsteps of the 48 million men and women who, since our Nation’s founding, have stepped forward to defend our land.

Today, there are more than 25 million living veterans who served our Nation in times of peace and war. Many of them willingly entered harm’s way to fight for our freedoms. These veterans have diverse religious beliefs and come from varying backgrounds and ethnicities. By their service, they kept America strong, and they have protected our way of life from tyranny’s grip for over two cen-

turies. At this moment, men and women of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard are serving around the world. They represent our resolute dedication to achieving a lasting peace out of the new challenges and threats of the 21st century.

On Veterans Day, let us pause to reflect on the sacrifices of all of those who have put on the uniform to serve in the United States military. Let us honor our veterans, who proved their heroism and love of country time and again, from Yorktown and Gettysburg to Iwo Jima and the Persian Gulf. They consistently defended our ideals across the globe; and they continue to inspire those who defend America today, half a world away. More than a million have died in service to America; and more than a million and a half have been wounded. Some sustained serious injuries in combat and now live with disabilities. Our Nation will always be grateful for the noble sacrifices made by these veterans. We can never adequately repay them. But we can honor and respect them for their service.

As we consider the sacrifices and efforts of our veterans, we must never forget that freedom comes at a cost. Therefore, I ask all schools to observe November 11 through November 17, 2001, as National Veterans Awareness Week, and to invite a veteran to speak at their school. This “Lessons in Liberty” initiative will serve to honor America’s veterans, while reminding young people of the strong principles upon which our Nation is founded. Our veterans have much to share with our young people about liberty, patriotism, democracy, and independence. They are living examples of the timeless truth that freedom is not free. I call upon our veterans to serve our country in a different way, by teaching a new generation of young Americans the importance of the liberties they helped secure.

In respect and recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made to the cause of peace and freedom, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103 (a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor veterans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2001, as